

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 08195 01 OF 02 292107Z

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9522

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 8195

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (SECTION INFO)

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SUBJECT: LABOR PARTY LEADERS DISCUSS ISRAEL'S 1976 FOREIGN POLICY

REF: FBIS TA 281503Z DEC 75

SUMMARY: LABOR PARTY SYMPOSIUM DEC. 26-27 ON ISRAELI
FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES IN 1976, AT WHICH RABIN, DAYAN,
EBAN AND BEN-AHARON MADE MAJOR PRESENTATIONS, RECONFIRMED
BASIC CONTINUITY OF ISRAELI POLICY. RABIN MADE CLEAR
THAT THERE ARE NO CHANGES IN THE OFFING ON GOI POSITION
REGARDING PALESTINIAN ISSUE AND READINESS FOR NEGOTIATIONS
ON POST-1967 BOUNDARIES. HE DESCRIBED ISRAEL'S
MAIN GOALS FOR 1976 AS (A) BLOCKING SYRIAN EFFORT TO
UNDERMINE PEACE PROSPECTS IN SECURITY COUNCIL AND (B)
CONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE FOR DISCUSSIONS LOOKING TO
AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. OTHER SPEAKERS REITERATED THEIR
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 08195 01 OF 02 292107Z

WELL-KNOWN POSITIONS, REVEALING ONCE AGAIN LABOR PARTY'S

ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE WIDE RANGE OF VIEWS ON SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

1. HIGHLIGHT OF DEC. 26-27 SYMPOSIUM AT LABOR PARTY'S STUDY CENTER (BEIT BERL) NEAR TEL AVIV WAS RABIN'S ANALYSIS AND DEFENSE OF GOI FOREIGN POLICY. WITHOUT BREAKING ANY NEW GROUND, RABIN ILLUSTRATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY WAS BASED ON THE LABOR ALIGNMENT'S WELL-ESTABLISHED PUBLIC RECORD, RUNNING FROM THE 1969 "ORAL TORAH" (OUTLINING ITS VIEWS ON THE EVENTUAL DISPOSITION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES) TO THE 1973 ELECTION PLATFORM AND THE GUIDELINES FOR THE LAST MEIR GOVERNMENT AND HIS OWN. RABIN EMPHASIZED THAT ISRAELI POLICY IN 1976 WILL HAVE TWOFOLD OBJECTIVE--TO BLOCK THE SYRIAN ATTEMPT AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO UNDERMINE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO CONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

2. ON TERRITORIAL ISSUES, RABIN ONCE MORE REVIEWED THE BIDDING: IN THE NORTH, ISRAEL WOULD NOT RELINQUISH THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, BUT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY REMAIN ALONG THE PRESENT LINES.

IN THE SOUTH, ISRAEL IS READY FOR FAR-REACHING TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS. TERRITORIAL CONTINUITY TO SHARM E-SHEIKH AT THE SOUTHERN TIP OF SINAI WOULD HAVE TO BE MAINTAINED, TOGETHER WITH SOME CHANGES OF THE 1967 BORDERS.

ISRAEL WAS PREPARED FOR TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IN THE WEST BANK, IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. THERE WAS NO NEED TO DRAW EXACT MAPS NOW, AS ANY TERRITORIAL CONCESSION IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA WOULD HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY THE ELECTORATE.

3. ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, RABIN AGAIN SAID THAT IT WAS NOT HEART OF ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, ITS SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN, AND ISRAEL WOULD NOT DEAL WITH THE PLO. HE AGAIN REJECTED PROPOSAL BY LABOR ALIGNMENT MODERATES THAT ISRAEL SHOULD ANNOUNCE ITS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE WITH "PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS" WHICH RECOGNIZE ISRAEL.
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PAGE 03 TEL AV 08195 01 OF 02 292107Z

4. MOSHE DAYAN, REPRESENTING TOUGHEST POSITION IN LABOR PARTY TODAY, REJECTED ANY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST BANK SAYING THAT "IT WILL BE AN HISTORICAL ERROR OF THE GRAVEST CONSEQUENCES". DAYAN ALSO OPPOSED THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE BECAUSE "IT WOULD NOT SOLVE THE REFUGEE PROBLEM...THE PALESTINIANS ON THE WEST BANK WOULD NOT ACCEPT THEM (SIC). THE REFUGEES WANT

NOTHING LESS THAN TAKING UP RESIDENCE IN JAFFA, HAIFA AND ASHDOD..." DAYAN ADDED THAT HE KNEW OF NO PRESSURE BY THE US TO CREATE A PALESTINIAN STATE ALONGSIDE ISRAEL. CONTRARY TO RABIN'S VIEW, DAYAN SAW A CHANCE OF OBTAINING A PROMISE TO END THE STATE OF WAR (NON-BELLIGERENCY), AT LEAST FROM EGYPT, WITH THE HELP OF THE U.S. "WASHINGTON'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH EGYPT, AND SADAT'S NEED FOR MASSIVE ECONOMIC AID, SHOULD BE OUR MAIN TRUMP CARD." DAYAN MAINTAINED THAT AMERICAN ECONOMIC AID AND POSSIBLE FUTURE MILITARY AID TO EGYPT SHOULD NOT BE EXTENDED AS LONG AS CAIRO STILL KEEPS THE WAR OPTION.

5. ABBA EBAN AND YITZHAK BEN-AHARON REPRESENTED THE DOVISH/MODERATE POSITIONS. EBAN PROPOSED ADAPTING THE INTERIM SETTLEMENT APPROACH TO THE WEST BANK. WARNING AGAINST STALEMATE IN 1976, HE CALLED FOR ADDITIONAL MOVES AND FOR A NEW DEFINITION OF ISRAEL'S POSITION ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. BUT HE AGREED WITH RABIN'S REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PLO, ADDING, HOWEVER, THAT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT REJECT TALKS WITH OTHER PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS. THE ISRAELI GOAL SHOULD BE PEACE WITH A JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE BASIS OF OPEN BORDERS. "THE WORLD WILL NOT PUT UP FOR LONG WITH A JEWISH STATE WITH A

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 08195 02 OF 02 291632Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEL AVIV SECTION 2 OF 2 8195

ONE-THIRD MINORITY OF ARAB CITIZENS,"HE WARNED. "I WANT THEM AS NEIGHBORS. CO-EXISTENCE CAN ONLY BE UNDER CONDITIONS OF EQUALITY."

6. BEN-AHARON, ONE OF LABOR PARTY'S MOST ELOQUENT "DOVES", CALLED FOR FINDING A MODUS VIVENDI BETWEEN JEWS AND ARABS, SAYING HE ASPIRED TO LIBERATION OF THE JEWS NOT OF THE LAND. ISRAEL, HE SAID, DOES NOT NEED TO RULE A MILLION ARABS. THE LINE OF DEMARCATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN NEGOTIATIONS.

7. WE NOTE THAT DECEMBER 27-28 EDITION OF INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE ALSO GIVES FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO RECENT STATEMENTS BY ALLON, PERES AND TOURISM MINISTER KOL ON THE NEED TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. THESE THREE MINISTERS REPEATED THEIR WELL-KNOWN AND DIVERGENT POSITIONS, AND MEDIA ATTENTION TO THEIR REMARKS SHOULD NOT BE READ AS SIGN OF NEW POLICY DEPARTURES.

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 08195 02 OF 02 291632Z

8. COMMENT: PRESENTATIONS AT BEIT BERL SYMPOSIUM SUGGEST SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS: (A) ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY REMAINS BASICALLY UNCHANGED FROM THE LAST MEIR GOVERNMENT, AND ITS FOUNDATIONS GO AS FAR BACK AS THE 1969 ELECTION (THE "ORAL TORAH"); (B) THE LABOR PARTY'S ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE SUCH A BROAD VARIETY OF VIEWS, WHICH IN PART ACCOUNTS FOR ITS SUCCESSFUL POWER MONOPOLY, IS A CAUSE OF PAST

AND CURRENT FRICTIONS, AND PRESAGES TOUGH STRUGGLE AT SUCH TIME AS GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE ON TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE REGARDING WEST BANK AND GAZA (WHICH ALSO WOULD REQUIRE ELECTION); AND (C) LABOR PARTY, DESPITE ITS DIVERGENT VIEWS, APPEARS TO BE RALLYING BEHIND RABIN AS HE GETS READY FOR HIS WASHINGTON TRIP. AFTER SHARP ATTACKS OF MODERATES AGAINST RABIN AT DECEMBER 9 FACTION MEETING, SYMPOSIUM WAS RELATIVELY HARMONIOUS AFFAIR.
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